# It Ain't What It Looks Like by BTSBlossom

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**Summary:**

Hopper doesn’t know what he expects when he kicks the door to the bar open. He just knows that he got a call out about an altercation, something about a guy with a weapon getting in a fight with out-of-towners. When he rolls up the place looks abandoned, which is unusual for a Thursday, even for this bar which lies along the outskirts of town. No, he doesn’t know what he expected but Billy Hargrove, covered in blood, machete in hand and a half dozen headless bodies surrounding him on the floor is nowhere near it.

# It Ain't What It Looks Like

**Author's Note:**

> just something I wrote up. Not beta read so all mistakes are mine and mine alone.

Hopper doesn't know what he expects when he kicks the door to the bar open. He just knows that he got a call out about an altercation, something about a guy with a weapon getting in a fight with out-of-towners. When he rolls up the place looks abandoned, which is unusual for a Thursday, even for this bar which lies along the outskirts of town. No, he doesn't know what he expected but Billy Hargrove, covered in blood, machete in hand and a half dozen headless bodies surrounding him on the floor is nowhere near it.

"Billy Hargrove?!" The teen swings around to face him at his shout, hands going up in the sign of surrender when he sees Hopper's drawn gun, though he doesn't drop the machete. Where the *fuck* did the kid get a *fucking machete*?

"Would you believe me, if I said it's not what it looks like?"

"Put the weapon down!"

"Thought so." Billy says with a sigh, slowly lowering the machete to the ground and even gives it a light kick out of arms reach.

"Hands behind your head and turn around!"

"Is all of this really necessary?"

"I'm not telling you again kid." Hopper practically growls. Billy rolls his eyes but follows his orders. Hopper approaches him slowly. He's heard a lot about Billy Hargrove from the kids and Harrington. Knows a bit about what happened at the Byers' house after he'd left with Jane, heard about the stunts he'd pulled before that night and had read between the lines when Max spoke about her step-brother and step-dad. It didn't take long to come to the decision that Billy Hargrove was a powder keg waiting to explode (similar to how he'd

been himself at that age). Hopper had thought the explosion would be another fist fight like what happened with Harrington or maybe going after his old man, but this…this had never crossed his mind. He'd never thought Billy Hargrove would actually kill someone let alone multiple people.

Hargrove went quietly, didn't fight him at all as Hopper handcuffed him, read him his Miranda Rights and lead him to the jeep. The teen seemed to be exercising his right to be silent as he didn't say a word the entire ride back and into the station. Hopper led him into the small interrogation room built into the station. He sent Powell and Callahan to the bar giving them a quick warning about what to expect when they got there, he called Gary Withers, the local coroner, and sent him to meet the deputies. He then called the Hargrove-Mayfield house.

"Hello?" a young voice answered.

"Max? Its Chief Hopper."

"Oh! Is everything okay?"

"Are your parents' home?"

"Yeah."

"I need you to put one of them on."

"Is this about Billy?" Max whispered. "He left earlier and hasn't come back…he was pretty angry too."

"Max."

"Is he okay? He's not hurt, is he?"

Hopper sighed, he knew how stubborn the kid could be. "He's not hurt. Now, please, put one of your parents' on."

"Okay." Hopper could hear as Max placed the phone down, the muffled sounds of her walking away, a few seconds of static, and then someone else was lifting the phone.

“Neil Hargrove.” A gruff voice spoke. Hopper didn’t know Neil Hargrove, had only caught a glimpse of him a few times around town but he’d gathered enough from the few times Max spoke about her home-life to know that he wasn’t a fan of the man.

“Mr. Hargrove, this is Chief Jim Hopper of the Hawkins Police Department. There has been an incident involving your son and I require your presence down at the station.”

“What kind of incident?” Mr. Hargrove’s voice was calm, as if he wasn’t surprised by this type of call.

“I would rather wait to explain it in person, if you don’t mind Sir.”

“Fine. I’ll be there in a few minutes.”

“Before you go, I would recommend calling your lawyer. He’s going to need it.”

“…I see. Thank you.” Mr. Hargrove hung up before Hopper could say anything.

With that done, Hopper went back to check on Billy. They might have a small station, but they were lucky enough to have an interrogation room with a two-way mirror, so Hopper could view the young boy unnoticed. Billy Hargrove was basically as Hopper had left him, cuffed hands leaning on the table, small rhythm being tapped out by his fingers. If it wasn’t for the tension Hopper could see lining the boy’s shoulders, he would have looked like a boy without a care in the world, not like one who had just killed six people. Hopper just watched the kid as he waited for the father to show up. He’d never experienced anything like this, even during his time in New York City, but with Hopper finding the kid standing over the bodies with weapon in hand it was a open and close case (he tried not to think of how the last time he thought that Will had been in the Upside Down).

“Hop, there’s a Neil Hargrove here.” Flo’s voice broke into his thoughts.

“Thanks.” He followed her out to the front desk where a man stood. He was short, a bit broad, and neatly groomed, with a hard look to

his eyes. Everything about him screamed military.

“Where’s my son?” Mr. Hargrove asked as soon as he caught sight of Hopper.

“He’s in there,” Hopper thumbed back towards the interrogation room. “Is your lawyer commin’?”

“Haven’t called one. I want to see my son.” Hopper raised a questioning eyebrow but led the man back to the room. When Billy caught sight of his father, he sat up stock still, the small amount of blood splattered over his face didn’t detract from the look of fear he gave his father. The hard look in Neil Hargrove’s eyes solidified further as he glared at his son.

“Tell me, Chief, what exactly has my son been arrested for.” Neil demanded before either of them had sat down, choosing instead to stand at the entrance.

“He’s been arrested for murder.”

“Dad—”

“Shut up! Murder?”

“He has appeared to have killed six people. Decapitated them to be specific. I found him standing over their bodies still holding the weapon.”

“What weapon?”

“A machete.”

“You son of a bitch!” Neil Hargrove moved before Hopper realized what was happening. He had charged at his son, lifting him from the chair and slamming him against the wall. “What the fuck have I told you?”

“It’s what mom—”

Neil pulled his son forward to slam him back against the wall, Bill’s head making a loud smacking sound as it connected with the wall.

“Don’t you dare! Don’t you *fucking* dare!” Neil Hargrove screamed.

“Mr. Hargrove! Let go of your son! Mr. Hargrove, let go of your son now!” Hopper managed to pull the father from his son. Billy leaned back against the wall, a look of defiance on his face as he looked at his father struggling in the hold of the police chief.

“This the last straw boy!” Neil yelled as he broke Hopper’s hold. “I’ve done everything I possibly can for you, but it is clear you are just as delusional as that whore mother of yours. You are on your own now. If I ever see you near Max, I will kill you.” With that Neil Hargrove turned on his heal and marched out of the station. Hopper and Billy watched in stunned silence until the slamming of the front door seemed to knock them out of it.

“You okay?” Hopper asked as Billy attempted to rub at the back of his head with his cuffed hands.

“I’m fine.” Billy grunted. He righted the chair he’d been sitting in before and slumped back into it. “So, we gonna start this? Aren’t you supposed to be asking questions or something?”

Hopper felt off balance. He didn’t know what he should be doing but questions seemed to be the right thing to do. He made a mental note to talk to Neil Hargrove, warn him about laying a finer on Max or his wife because if the man was willing to go after his own son like that in a police station there wasn’t a doubt in Hopper’s mind that he would touch his wife or step-kid.

“What happened tonight, Billy?”

“I got in an argument with my dad. Pretty similar to what just happened to be honest.” Billy’s voice was bland, almost monotone. He blankly stared at a spot over Hopper’s shoulder.

“And that led you to the bar how?”

“I was looking for a fight.”

“And the machete?”

“Best tool for the job.”

“Right…where did you get the machete?”

“The trunk of my car.” Billy’s eyes drifted till they met Hopper’s but only for a second before they went back to the wall. “You should find my car, it’s parked near the bar.”

Hopper sighed, rubbed a hand over his face. Nothing about this night was going the way he expected. There was something off about his answers, about his voice, his posture, everything. There was more to this than Billy snapping after a fight with his dad. Neil Hargrove seemed to know, it might have something to do with Billy’s mom, something that caused friction between father and son. Hopper remembered what Billy had said when he’d faced Hopper in the bar.

*“Would you believe me, if I said it’s not what it looks like?”*

“What did you mean? When you said, it wasn’t what it looked like?” Hopper asked. Billy looked at him again, eyes searching for something in Hopper’s.

“Things aren’t always what they appear. Did you know Will Byers and Barb Holland aren’t the only people to go missing in the area in the last few years?” Hopper suppressed a flinch at the names. “In fact, nearly twenty people have gone missing in the surrounding area in the last five years. That’s quite a lot and that’s only what’s been reported by the towns, most of this place is drive-through country and the last places those reported missing persons were seen is in bars similar to the one you found me in. With that considered, the missing persons number is likely higher. If you look close, there’s a pattern in the disappearances so it wasn’t hard to figure out that one would happen at that bar pretty soon.”

“So you went in there with a machete?”

“I knew what to expect.”

“Is that so?”

“Mmhmm.” Billy leaned forward, when he spoke his voice was quieter, almost a whisper. “You really should find my car. Check the trunk.” Billy sat back, an air about him that said he wouldn’t say

anything else. His keys now sat in the middle of the table. Hopper nodded, collected the keys and stood up, ready to leave and find that blue Camaro. He stopped at the door and turned back but Billy was clearly pulling in on himself, shutting down. He wasn't going to get anything else out of the kid.

He stayed at the station long enough to observe as Flo took pictures off Billy, documenting the blood-spattered all over the boy. Billy went through the experience with an uncaring air, a vague sense of annoyance floating about him but subjected himself to it anyways. When it became increasingly clear that the boy wasn't going to fight anything about he arrest, and the photos had been taken, Hopper told Flo to get a boy a wet towel to clean himself up and then headed out to find the car.

When he reached the bar again, he checked in on his deputies and Dr. Withers. Callahan was looking paler than usual, had most likely lost his dinner at the sight, but was going about taking pictures; Powell was standing next to Dr. Withers, taking down the doctor's observations in a small notebook.

"Hey, Chief." Powell called out, noticing Hopper first. "We've called Indianapolis, they're gonna send us a CSI team to help with this," he waves a hand to indicate the crime scene then glances at his watch. "Should be here in the next hour."

"Not sure why we need them when we got the guy at the station." Callahan mumbles as he crouches down to get a close-up of one of the bodies, looking a little green when he stands back up.

"This is going to be big case. We'll have a lot of attention on our little town, specifically, on us so its best to follow protocol. Get as much evidence as we can so none of the families can call negligence on us." Dr. Withers answers.

Hopper nods in agreement, "He's right, we've got the kid, but we'll still need all the documentation for court."

"He's not denying it is he?" Callahan asks as he comes to stand next to the chief, Powell and Withers look at him interested in his answer.

“Not quite…but there’s something he’s not saying. Something he’s hiding.”

“The CSIs might get us something to loosen him up.” Powell suggests.

“Maybe. He did mention his car, and from what I’ve heard the kid is pretty attached to it, it shouldn’t be to far. You guys finish up here, I’m going to see if I can find it.” The three men all give him some form of acknowledgement as he turns around and heads back out of the bar. It doesn’t take long to find. Its parked behind the bar, where they’ve got a lot for the larger weekend crowds; the Camaro would likely stand out even in a packed lot, as is, it pops even more being one of the three cars there. The other two likely belong to some of the victims, he makes a mental note to check on that later before heading straight to Billy’s car.

He pulls out the keys and unlocks the driver side door. He doesn’t get in, just leans down and takes a quick look inside. There’s a small ashtray built in under the radio with a couple cigarette butts, a soda can in the cup holder, a shoe box in the passenger footwell. Hopper reaches through and picks it up, lifting the lid reveals a large number of cassette tapes, alphabetically organized it looks like; he’s not sure why he finds that interesting, but he does. He puts the box back then reaches up to open the glove box. He finds a pack of cigarettes, the usual paper work, a couple receipts for speeding tickets, and a thin envelope. He pulls the envelope out and opens it, surprised to find it contains pictures that he quickly flips through. Nearly all of them have the same subject—a pretty, young blonde woman. A couple of her at the beach in a bathing suit and large sun hat. One of her at a park a little bit older with a toddler on her hip. One of her leaning against the trunk of the Camaro, long blonde hair tied up in a ponytail, with a shotgun in a loose hold. Her and the toddler again, this time both at a table leaning over a large book clearly invested in its contents. There are a few more featuring the young boy aging between being a toddler and a young kid, no more than eight or nine. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out that the two in the photos are Billy and his mother. After what happened at the station, Hopper isn’t surprised by the lack Neil Hargrove in any of the pictures or why Billy felt the need to hide them in his car. Just as he did with the shoe box, Hopper replaces the pictures in the envelope and places it

back the glove box. There's nothing in the backseat except for a few balled up fast food wrappers. He closes the door and heads around to the trunk. When he pops it open he's a bit underwhelmed. There's a tool box shoved to one corner, a car jack and tire iron, a duffle bag that when unzipped reveals it to be Billy's gym bag shoved to the opposite side. There's nothing else there. Nothing that could be considered important or significant. He's baffled on why Billy was so insistent on checking it unless the kid was just fucking with him.

He's about to close the lid when something catches his eye. A scrap of the trunk lining; normally, it wouldn't stand out, but the rest of the car is so well maintained. Billy obviously cared about the car, most likely because it belonged to his mother going by the pictures, so the thick strip stood out like a sore thumb. Hopper has learned to trust his instincts so when they tell him to grab the strip and pull, he does. A portion of the trunk bottom comes with it, revealing it to be a false bottom and what he finds under it nearly punches the breath out of him.

It's a weapons cache.

There are several different hand guns, a couple shotguns that looked sawed off, a couple boxes of ammo per weapon, an unholy amount of knives with long blades, what look like wooden stakes, and an axe. What stands out even between all of that, is the couple of flasks with strange markings on them and a fucking bag of rock salt. Some of the weapons are strapped to the underside of the lid and there's an empty spot that must have held the machete before Billy used it in the bar. Why the fuck Billy has all of this or how he even got all of it is beyond Hopper. Goggling at the sheer amount of weapons Billy has managed to shove into the small space, Hopper isn't sure how he notices it but he sees something shoved into the back corner of the cubby and, following his instincts again, carefully reaches in and grabs whatever it is. It turns out to be a small moleskin book, that's bulging from what appears to be added scraps of paper and a few pictures. He unwraps the small string holding the book closed and opens it to a random page careful of the loose ones. Its covered in neat but tight writing, a polaroid paper clipped to the page, but Hopper can't quite make out what it is of.

*Rugaru*

*Powers: super strength, speed, stamina and senses*

*Weakness: Fire*

*Born human, around age thirty will begin to feel insatiable hunger that culminates in the feasting of human flesh. Once a rugaru has eaten flesh full transformation will take place. Rugarus do not appear to be like vamps, there appears to be a genetic connection which means that if a child is found near a Rugaru, one that it appears to be protecting in anyway, it is likely also a Rugaru and must be killed. The only way that has been found to kill one is by setting it on fire.*

*Before final transformation, Rugaru's will look like a normal human but a sign is red, bloody scelras (the white of the eye). Once transformed skin becomes extremely pale with prominent veins and skin folds along with fully black eyes like that of a demon.*

Hopper flips to another page.

*Djinn/Jinn (Genies)*

*Powers: Hallucinogenic touch, telepathy/dream walking, super strength/ speed/senses/agility, shapeshifting, immortality(?)*

*Weakness: Silver and lamb blood*

*Djinn feed on human blood, though there are rumors that some feed on fear. They look human in appearance but have specific types of tattoos covering large portions of their bodies* [a small sketch of what Hopper assumes to be the tattoos mentioned with the next couple lines working around it]. *They are able to poison their victims with their touch, this will either kill the victim immediately or will place the victim in a coma-like state so that the djinn will be able to feed on their blood over a longer period of time. Djinn are able to read minds and use this ability to find the deepest desires of their victims. The djinn then appear to use their touch (possibly connected with the poison) to induce powerful hallucinations around these desires. There is no antidote for a djinn's poison—rumor says a family in the Midwest may have found one, have put request in with usual contacts but it is unknown if I will hear back.*

*Sure fire way to kill a djinn is a silver knife that has been dipped in lamb's blood.*

Another page.

*Wendigo*

*Powers: Voice mimicry, immortality, super speed/strength/senses/agility, claws*

*Weakness: Fire, Anasazi symbols*

*A human that has been forced to eat human flesh to survive will transform into a wedigo, they will then begin to crave and feed solely on it. They are never satisfied and will continually search for new victims. Tend to live in places with long cold winters (rarely seen outside of Minnesota or north Michigan) and have developed a hibernation habit, this leads them to hoard their food. Found often in caves and abandoned mines.*

*Wendigo are tall, about fifteen feet in height, but remain vaguely humanoid looking. Skin is palid, bodies look emaciated with bones visible under skin. Eyes are pushed back, deep in their sockets and have crooked, sharp teeth. The posses razor-like claws which are used to rip their victims apart.*

*Fire is the only known way to kill a wendigo. Anasazi symbols (sketched below) drawn in a protective circle will keep a wendgo away similar to how salt wards off demons and ghosts.*

"What the fucking hell?" Hopper mutters to himself closing the book.

"What the fucking hell?" Hopper repeats when he slams the book down on the table in front of Billy. The kid reaches out slowly, as if waiting for Hopper to stop him, and runs his fingers gently over the leather binding.

"It was my mom's." Billy says so quietly Hopper almost doesn't hear him. He's quiet for a second as he looks up at Hopper, looks like he's thinking of what to say next. "Monsters are real…I feel like you might know that as well as I do."

Hopper slowly sits in the seat across from Billy, "What makes you say

that?"

Billy grabs the book, opens it to a page near the back and flips it around for Hopper to look at. The handwriting is different, still tight but not as neat. There's another polaroid attached, this one of something Hopper is familiar with – a demodog.

***Unknown***

***Powers: N/A***

***Weakness: N/A (appears to have been beaten with somethiutting—nail bat?)***

***So far nothing is known about the creature pictured. It does not resemble any creature described in other entries. May be connected specifically to Hawkins, IN. Mutated creature caused by radiation from a government lab? (radiation supposedly is lead to death of local girl but now unsure of how trustworthy that report was) (Connection to Byers? Harrington? Nerd herd?)***

***Possible conspiracy involving local police chief and small selection of local community members (including Max). More research is required.***

"Monsters are real." Billy repeats. "Are you going to deny it?" he asks when Hopper tears his eyes away from the journal to look at the boy. He thinks about it. About denying the existence of monsters, knowledge of demodogs, of the lab. Instead he doesn't say anything, nothing that confirms or denies.

"The bar?"

Billy flips to another page.

*Vampires*

Hopper can't bring himself to read more than that, that another word might be the straw that broke the camels back and he'll, finally, loose his fucking mind.

"You had a nest. They frequented the bar. Decapitation is the best

way to kill them, the machete was the best weapon for the job." Billy pauses, grazes the tips of his fingers along the handwriting. "There are people out there, like me…like my mom, we're called hunters. We know about the monsters out there in the world, we find them, we kill them."

They sit in silence after that. Hopper had a million thoughts running through his head, unsure of which to tackle first. Billy stares at the book, having closed it again, and runs his fingers over the image embossed on the cover.

"I don't think I can make this go away, Billy. Too much has already been seen by too many people." Hopper finally sighs. "We've got people from the lab in fucking Indianapolis coming down."

"I get a phone call, right?"

"Sure, why the fuck not?" Hopper uncuffs Billy and brings him to his office. Billy opens the journal to the first page, then picks up the phone and dials.

"Hello, sir. My name is Billy Hargrove, my mom was Rose…you might have known her when she was Rose McEwan? Yeah, yeah that was her. No, that's not why...I'm in a bit of trouble and Mom said if anything like that happened to call you. I got caught, arrested…the officer is amendable. Oh, it was a vamp nest. Caught them at a bar they were cruising. Mmhmm, okay. Thank you, sir." Billy hangs up the phone. A few minutes later it rings. "You'll want to answer that."

Hopper does. He does not for a second believe that the gruff voice on the other side belongs to an FBI agent, but he plays along and follows their instructions. Within the next three hours its understood that Billy was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time and gets slapped with a small citation for underage drinking, those killed in the bar were killed by an unknown stranger but is being looked at by the FBI, an "agent" will be there by tomorrow to collect all the evidence as the FBI will be taking over the investigation. A few of the Indianapolis techs give him a strange look when he tells them but shrug and finish the preliminary processing before heading back to the city, leaving everything with Hopper. Powell and Callahan question it a bit more but ultimately follow Hopper's lead.

By the time everything is sorted its nearly four in the morning and Hopper is dead on his feet. He'd sent Flo home hours ago, Powell and Callahan a few hours after that, so the only ones left in the station are Hopper and Billy. Hopper just wants to go home and crawl into bed but he's got to figure out what do with the kid, he can't send him home not with his dad there. Its clear Neil Hargrove has an idea of the hunting world and does not approve his son being involved, not that Hopper does either, but he can't let Billy go back to that kind of environment.

"Right, so grab your shit, you're coming home with me."

"What?"

"I'm dead tired, please don't fight me now. It's four in the morning, I'm not taking or letting you go home to your dad, which by the way, we're going to deal with later—*later, don't fight*—so, instead you're going to come home with me. We're both going to pass out for the next ten to twelve hours and then tackle whatever the fuck else we need to. Understand?"

"Yes, Sir." Hopper feels uncomfortable with the way Billy says that but files that way with the other things he's going to address once he gets some sleep.

"Fair warning, I live in a cabin out in the woods, you'll have to sleep on the couch and I've got a pre-teen kid who's probably going to wake us before either of us are ready." Billy shrugs as if none of that really matters to him which it might not considering everything else.

"Will you tell me what that thing was?" Billy taps the book he's still holding, indicating the demodog.

"I'll think about it. Are you going to give me an honest statement about your dad?" Hopper asks as they climb into his truck.

"I'll think about it."

Hopper can't help the humored huff he lets out as he starts the car, "Fair enough, kid. Fair enough."